

## Racial split on COVID-19 endures as restrictions ease in U.S.

By ANNIE MA and HANNAH FINGERHUT

Associated Press

Black and Hispanic Americans remain far more cautious in their approach to COVID-19 than white Americans, recent polls show, reflecting diverging preferences on how to deal with the pandemic as federal, state and local restrictions fall by the wayside.

Despite majority favorability among U.S. adults overall for measures like mask mandates, public health experts said divided opinions among racial groups reflect not only the unequal impact of the pandemic on people of color but also apathy among some white Americans.

Black Americans (63%) and Hispanic Americans (68%) continue to be more likely than white Americans (45%) to say they are at least somewhat worried about themselves or a family member being infected with COVID-19, according to an April poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Throughout the pandemic,



People wait in line for a COVID-19 test in Los Angeles, Tuesday, Jan. 4, 2022.

Associated Press

Black and Hispanic communities have experienced higher rates of illness and death from COVID, said Amelia Burke-Garcia, public health program area director at NORC. Those experiences have resulted in greater levels of stress, anxiety and awareness of the

risks of catching COVID-19, she said, which means people of color are more likely to feel measures like mask mandates are needed.

"We've seen these trends endure throughout the entire pandemic," Burke-Garcia said.

Continued on next page

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**Continued from Front**

"What we're seeing now as mitigation measures are being rolled back is there's still great concern amongst Black Americans and Hispanic Americans around the risk of getting sick."

Seventy-one percent of Black Americans say they favor requiring face masks for people traveling on airplanes, trains and other types of public transportation. That's more than the 52% of white Americans who support mask mandates for travelers; 29% of white Americans are opposed. Among Hispanic Americans, 59% are in favor and 20% are opposed. The poll was conducted before a ruling by a federal judge scuttled the government's mask mandate for travelers.

In Indiana, Tuwanna Plant said she sees fewer and fewer people wearing masks in public, even though she said she has been diligent in always wearing one. Plant, who is Black, said she sees people treating the pandemic like it's over, and she wants the mask mandate to continue.

Plant, a 46-year-old sous chef, said she had some concerns about getting the vaccine and took every other precaution, such as cleaning and masking, to avoid getting sick but recently was hospitalized for COVID-19.

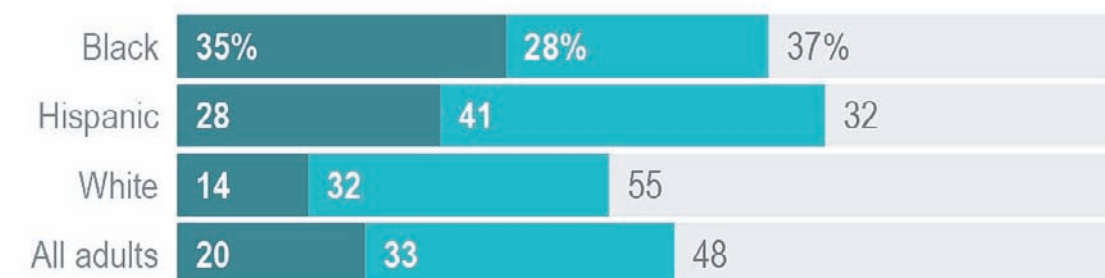
The experience scared her — she has a preexisting lung condition, and knew family members who died

## Black, Hispanic Americans especially likely to feel worried about COVID-19

A new AP-NORC poll shows majorities of Black and Hispanic Americans are at least somewhat worried about themselves or family being infected with COVID-19, compared with fewer than half of white Americans.

### How worried are you about you or someone in your family being infected with coronavirus?

■ Extremely/Very worried ■ Somewhat worried  
■ Not too/Not at all worried



Results based on interviews with 1,085 U.S. adults conducted April 14-18. The margin of error is  $\pm 3.9$  percentage points for the full sample.

Source: AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research

AP

from COVID-19. She said she plans to get vaccinated as soon as she can.

"I called my children while I was in the emergency room," Plant said. "I didn't know ... if it was going to get better or worse, I didn't know. So it was the experience for me altogether."

Dr. Celine Gounder, an infectious disease specialist and epidemiologist and editor-at-large at Kaiser Health News, said people's lived experiences deeply shape how they perceive the pandemic. Anecdotes and personal experience can have a larger impact

on behavior than numbers, she said, and people of color are more likely to have had negative experiences with health care prior to and during the pandemic. While new medicines and vaccines have made it easier to treat COVID-19, Gounder said many people still face systemic barriers to accessing that medical care. Others risk losing their jobs or are unable to take time off if they do fall ill, she said, or cannot avoid things like public transit to reduce their exposures.

"When people argue that they don't have to mask

on the plane, that means something very different for someone who has access to all of these new innovations than it does for somebody who has no health insurance, who struggles to care for an elderly parent and their children, who's maybe a single mom working in a job where she has no paid sick and family medical leave," Gounder said. "It's just a completely different calculation."

In January, an AP-NORC poll showed Black and Hispanic Americans were more likely than white Americans to feel certain

things would be essential for getting back to life without feeling at risk of infection. For example, 76% of Black Americans and 55% of Hispanic Americans said it was essential for getting back to normal that most people regularly wear face masks in public indoor places, compared with 38% of white Americans.

Last month, an AP-NORC poll showed Black and Hispanic Americans, 69% and 49%, were more likely than white Americans, 35%, to say they always or often wear a face mask around others.

Lower support for mask mandates and other precautions among white Americans may also reflect less sensitivity towards what occurs in communities of color. In a 2021 study of mask wearing during the early part of the pandemic, researchers found that mask wearing among white people increased when white people were dying at greater rates in the surrounding community. When Black and Hispanic people were dying, mask usage was lower.

Berkeley Franz, a co-author of the paper, said that in addition to residential segregation that separates white people from communities of color, past research has shown that white people can display ambivalence toward policies that they believe mostly help people of color.

"Anti-Blackness is really pervasive and has tremendous consequences, both in terms of the policies that get passed, and what doesn't," Franz said. "White people can still have really racist actions without seeing themselves that way and understanding the consequences. It's largely below the surface and unintentional but has tremendous consequences in terms of equity." □



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In conjunction with Dag van de Arbeid (Labor Day), Aruba Today will not be published on Monday, May 2nd, 2022. We will resume our regular printing schedule on Tuesday, May 3rd, 2022.



# Federal judges are asked to pave way for Purdue Pharma deal

By GEOFF MULVIHILL

Associated Press

Lawyers for OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma and many of those who had claims against the company over the toll of opioids joined together Friday to urge a federal judicial panel to allow a plan that would settle lawsuits across the country.

The legal question facing the judges from the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New York: Does a bankruptcy judge have the authority to grant members of the Sackler family who own the company protection from civil lawsuits over the toll of opioids?

Sackler family members have insisted on the legal shield in exchange for providing the money behind the proposed settlement. And as their offer was boosted over more than two years of negotiations and mediation, most of the parties came to support the deal—including all the states.

But the U.S. Bankruptcy Trustee's Office, an arm of the Justice Department, has continued pushing back, asserting it's improper to provide a legal shield for members of the wealthy family who have not themselves filed for bankruptcy protection.

"A non-debtor says: 'I can get the benefit of a discharge but I don't need to



A man looks at cardboard gravestones with the names of victims of opioid abuse outside the courthouse where the Purdue Pharma bankruptcy is taking place in White Plains, N.Y., Monday, Aug. 9, 2021.

comply with any of the rules of the bankruptcy code and I don't need to contribute all of my assets," Michael Shih, a lawyer for the office, told a three-judge panel of the 2nd Circuit in a hearing Friday in New York City. "That's the fundamental inconsistency here."

Lawyers for Purdue and others who support the settlement said that the protections for Sackler family members would be limited to cases involving opioids and are needed to get a fair outcome, rather than seeing the fight continue through many trials all over

the country.

"The releases at issue are not only important to the plan, they are absolutely essential," said Mitchell Hurlley, a lawyer for the official committee of unsecured creditors in Purdue's bankruptcy case told the judges.

Purdue lawyer Marshall Huebner pointed out that unlike other parties, the Bankruptcy Trustee's office and federal government are not in line to receive any money from the settlement. He told the judges that allowing lawsuits against the Sacklers to

move forward might not result in more money to fight the opioid crisis—in part because most of the family's wealth is in trusts, much of it overseas.

"We are bringing in billions and billions of dollars to save lives," Huebner told the court.

All three judges asked pointed questions on the positions of both Huebner and Shih.

The 2nd Circuit judges did not indicate when they would rule, but it often takes weeks or months after a hearing.

No matter how the 2nd Cir-

cuit rules on the case, an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court is possible. If Purdue and its allies win, they still must go back to the bankruptcy judge to get the latest version of the deal approved.

Under the planned deal, Sackler family members would contribute \$5.5 billion to \$6 billion over time, plus give up ownership of the company. Purdue would then become a new entity known as Kinoa Pharma that would dedicate its profits to fighting the nation's opioid epidemic.

Most of the Sacklers' money also would go to fighting the epidemic, but at least \$750 million would be distributed to some individual victims and their families.

Other product-liability cases have been settled through bankruptcy court by using the sort of protections this deal would give the Sacklers. But opponents of the settlement are challenging the strategy based on the fact that a handful of parties still object to the deal.

Almost all the governments and other entities that originally sued Purdue have agreed to the settlement. Besides the bankruptcy trustee, the only official objectors left are Canadian local governments and First Nations, and two mothers of sons who died of opioid overdoses. □

Associated Press

# NY to move some primaries to August after court tosses maps

By MARINA VILLENEUVE

Associated Press

**ALBANY, N.Y. (AP)**—A New York judge ordered Friday that the state's congressional and state Senate primaries be delayed until Aug. 23 to provide enough time to replace district maps that were ruled unconstitutional this week.

State Judge Patrick McAllister moved the primaries back from their original date of June 28. He said the independent expert he tasked with helping him craft new maps, special master Jonathan Cervas, will finish drawing districts by May 20.

New York is set to separately hold gubernatorial and state Assembly primaries in June, unless lawmakers or Gov. Kathy Hochul decide to delay.

New York once held congressional and state office primaries on separate dates, but lawmakers in 2019 consolidated them to save money, increase voter turnout and make the process less confusing for the public.

On Wednesday, New York's highest court rejected new congressional and state senate maps that had widely been seen as favoring Democrats. The major-

ity decision largely agreed with Republican voters who argued the district boundaries were unconstitutionally gerrymandered.

The ruling also dashed Democrats' national redistricting hopes, which leaned heavily on their ability to gerrymander New York state to maximize the number of seats they could win in the U.S. House of Representatives.

A state board of elections spokesperson said Thursday the state had asked the U.S. Justice Department if a federal court might need to review any change to the date of the primary.



Judge Patrick McAllister listens to arguments during a hearing in court, Thursday, March, 31, 2022 in Bath, N.Y.

Associated Press

The spokesperson said Friday they were still looking

into whether a review will be required. □



# Former Idaho lawmaker found guilty of raping intern

By **REBECCA BOONE**

**Associated Press**

**BOISE, Idaho (AP)** — A former Idaho lawmaker was convicted Friday of raping a 19-year-old legislative intern after a dramatic trial in which the young woman fled the witness stand during testimony, saying "I can't do this."

The intern told a Statehouse supervisor that Aaron von Ehlinger raped her at his apartment after the two had dinner at a Boise restaurant in March 2021. He said the sex was consensual.

At the time, von Ehlinger was a state representative from Lewiston, but he later resigned.

Von Ehlinger, 39, was found guilty Friday of rape. He was found not guilty of sexual penetration with a foreign object.

Afterward, 4th District Judge Michael Reardon told the jury: "This has been an unusual case attended by many unexpected circumstances, but I appreciate your attention ... and hard work."

Sentencing has been scheduled for July 28.

Von Ehlinger sat calmly as the verdict was read, as he has throughout the trial. Von Ehlinger talked quietly



**Former Idaho state Rep. Aaron von Ehlinger testifies on his own behalf during day three of his rape trial at the Ada County Courthouse, Thursday, April 28, 2022, in Boise, Idaho.**

**Associated Press**

with his attorney, who removed items from Von Ehlinger's pockets as he was handcuffed and remanded to custody.

The Associated Press generally does not identify people who say they have been sexually assaulted, and has referred to the woman in this case as "Jane Doe" at her request.

Doe haltingly described the moments the alleged assault began, before abruptly leaving the witness stand.

"He tried to put his fingers between my legs and I closed my knees," Doe said. At that, she stood up.

"I can't do this," she said, quickly walking out of the courtroom.

The judge gave the prosecuting attorneys 10 minutes to find her to determine if she would return and resume her testimony.

When she did not, the judge told the jurors they had to "strike (Doe's testimony) from your minds as if it never happened," be-

cause the defense could not cross-examine her.

During his testimony Thursday, von Ehlinger often spoke in a clear, loud voice directly to jurors, saying he and Doe decided to return to his apartment to "hang out" after eating at a fancy Boise restaurant. Then they began making out on the couch, he said.

"Things were going well, and I asked (Doe) if she would like to move to the bedroom," von Ehlinger said. "She said 'Sure.' We

got up, held hands and walked into the bedroom." Deliberations stretched for seven hours until nearly 8 p.m. Thursday before the jury decided to break for the evening. At one point, the judge summoned the attorneys to his chambers because the jury asked a question. No details were made public about the jury's inquiry.

When the allegations became public — largely because of the legislative ethics investigation — Doe faced unrelenting harassment from some of von Ehlinger's supporters. Her name, photo and personal details about her life were repeatedly publicized in "doxxing" incidents. One of the people who frequently harassed her was in the courthouse to attend the trial, but law enforcement banned the man from the floor where case was being heard.

During closing arguments, Ada County Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Katelyn Farley told jurors that the case was about "power in the wrong hands" used to the "great devastation" of Doe. Von Ehlinger had social, political and physical power over the petite intern, Farley said. □

## First case of human bird flu infection confirmed in Colorado



**Turkeys stand in a barn on turkey farm near Manson, Iowa on Aug. 10, 2015.**

**Associated Press**

By **DAVID PITT**

**DES MOINES, Iowa (AP)** — A Colorado prison inmate has tested positive for bird flu in the first recent confirmed case of a human infected with the disease that has

resulted in the deaths of millions of chickens and turkeys, but federal officials say they still see little threat to the general public.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Preven-

tion said Thursday evening that the man who tested positive had been in a pre-release program and was helping to remove chickens from an infected farm. The man, who was under age 40, reported fatigue for a few days but has since recovered, state health and CDC officials said in a statement.

The man was isolated and is being treated with an antiviral drug. Other people involved in the bird removal operation in Colorado have tested negative, but they are being retested out of an abundance of caution.

"The inmate was part of a prison work crew composed of inmates nearing release which had been working at the farm before

a case of bird flu was confirmed there on April 19," said Lisa Wiley, a spokeswoman for the Colorado Department of Corrections. When bird flu was detected at the farm in Montrose County, the inmates were asked to help in the process of killing and removing the birds.

Agriculture officials have reported an outbreak on one Montrose County farm with 58,000 broiler breeder chickens.

Despite the infection, the CDC considers the threat to the general public to be low because spread of the virus to people requires close contact with an infected bird.

Signals that could raise the public health risk might include multiple reports of vi-

rus infections in people from exposure to birds, or identification of spread from one infected person to a close contact. The CDC also is monitoring the bird flu virus for genetic changes, which could indicate the virus is adapting to spread more readily from birds to people or other mammals.

The current strain of bird flu, the H5N1, has been spreading among backyard and commercial chicken and turkey flocks in the U.S. since late February. Viruses have been found in U.S. commercial and backyard birds in 29 states and in wild birds in 34 states. More than 35 million chickens and turkeys have been killed and removed to avoid spread, the U.S. Department of Agriculture reported. □



# Relatives: Former U.S. Marine killed while fighting in Ukraine

By JONATHAN DREW  
Associated Press

A 22-year-old former U.S. Marine was killed alongside Ukrainian forces in the war with Russia, his relatives told news outlets in what's the first known death of an American citizen fighting in Ukraine.

Willy Joseph Cancel was killed Monday while working for a military contracting company that sent him to Ukraine, his mother, Rebecca Cabrera, told CNN. Cancel had recently worked as a corrections officer in Tennessee and had previously served in the Marines from 2017-21, joining the service the same year he graduated from high school.

Cabrera said her son had signed up to work with the private military contractor shortly before fighting began in Ukraine on Feb. 24. She told CNN he agreed to go to Ukraine.

"He wanted to go over because he believed in what Ukraine was fighting for, and he wanted to be a part of it to contain it there so it didn't come here, and that maybe our American soldiers wouldn't have to be involved in it," she said. Cabrera said her son's body has not been found. "They haven't found his



Clean-up crews prepare to work at the site of an explosion in Kyiv, Ukraine on Friday, April 29, 2022.

Associated Press

body," she said. "They are trying, the men that were with him, but it was either grab his body or get killed, but we would love for him to come back to us."

She said her son flew to Poland on March 12 and entered Ukraine shortly after. She said he was fighting alongside men from a number of countries.

Cancel had also served as a volunteer firefighter in New York and leaves behind a 7-month-old son, according to an online

fundraising page set up by a man identifying himself as his father. His wife received the call informing her of his death on Tuesday, the page said. The father wrote that Cancel made the decision in early March to go to Ukraine because he wanted to defend innocent people.

Cancel graduated from Newburgh Free Academy in New York in 2017, the school district said. He participated in the Junior Reserve Officers' Training

Corps while in high school. Cancel worked at a private prison in Tennessee from May 2021 until January, said Matthew Davio, a spokesman for the private prison company CoreCivic. The Troup Turner Correctional Center, a medium security facility, is about an hour northeast of Nashville. "As a correctional officer, Mr. Cancel served his state and his community by helping maintain a safe, secure environment where inmates can participate in

life-changing reentry programs. We are grateful for his service and saddened by his loss," Davio said in a statement.

While in the Marines, Cancel served as a rifleman and was stationed at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. He was given a bad conduct discharge after he was convicted of violating a lawful general order, Marine Corps spokesperson Maj. Jim Stenger said.

He had no war zone deployments, Stenger said. No other details on the bad conduct conviction were provided.

The U.S. has not confirmed the reports of Cancel's death. On Friday, the State Department said it was aware of the reports and is "closely monitoring the situation" but could not comment further "due to privacy considerations."

"We once again reiterate U.S. citizens should not travel to Ukraine due to the active armed conflict and the singling out of U.S. citizens in Ukraine by Russian government security officials, and that U.S. citizens in Ukraine should depart immediately if it is safe to do so using any commercial or other privately available ground transportation options," the State Department said. □

# EU's border chief resigns after reports of migrant pushbacks

By FRANK JORDANS and SAMUEL PETREQUIN

Associated Press

**BRUSSELS (AP)** — The head of the European Union's border agency resigned immediately Friday, the bloc's executive said. The move followed media allegations that his agency was involved in illegal pushbacks of migrants who were trying to reach Europe.

Pushbacks — forcing would-be refugees away from a border before they can reach a country and claim asylum — are considered violations of international refugee protection agreements, which say people shouldn't be expelled or returned to a country where their life and safety might be in danger

due to their race, religion, nationality or being members of a social or political group.

The EU Commission said it "takes note of the resignation" of Frontex Executive Director Fabrice Leggeri following a day of speculation about his fate. The announcement came after the board of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, known as Frontex, met on whether to accept his offer to resign.

Leggeri, who had been under mounting pressure to resign for months, offered to resign a day after a media investigation this week suggested that Frontex's database recorded illegal pushbacks in the Aegean Sea as "prevention of de-

parture" incidents. Leggeri had previously denied wrongdoing.

Last year, the EU's anti-fraud watchdog, OLAF, opened an investigation into Frontex over allegations of harassment, misconduct and migrant pushbacks.

German Interior Ministry spokesperson Maximilian Kall said replacing Leggeri offers the border agency an opportunity for a "fresh start."

"It offers the possibility of fully resolving the allegations, creating complete transparency and ensuring that all missions by Frontex occur in full conformity with European law," he said.

The Commission said "Frontex fulfils a critically important task to support mem-



Fabrice Leggeri, Executive Director of Frontex, attends a meeting of EU Interior ministers at the EU Council building in Brussels on Dec. 2, 2019.

Associated Press

ber states, manage common European Union external borders, and to uphold fundamental rights in doing so." Leggeri had led Frontex

since the 2015, when well over 1 million people, many of them refugees fleeing war in Syria, entered the bloc. □



# Powerful explosion at Kabul mosque kills at least 10 people

By KATHY GANNON

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)

— A powerful explosion ripped through a mosque in the Afghan capital of Kabul on Friday, killing at least 10 people and wounding as many as 30, a Taliban spokesman said.

Hundreds of worshippers had gathered for prayers on the last Friday of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan and the Khalifa Aga Gul Jan Mosque was packed, said local residents, fearing the casualty toll could rise further.

The Taliban-appointed interior ministry spokesman, Mohammad Nafi Takor, could not provide more details and Taliban security men cordoned off the area. The source of the explosion was not immediately known and no one has claimed responsibility for the blast.

Initially, at least 20 were reported wounded but Khalid Zadran, spokesman for the Taliban-appointed Kabul police chief, later raised the number to as many as 30. The death toll remained at 10, he said and also tweeted that "security agencies are investigating the incident."

The explosion was so loud that the neighborhood of



An Afghan blood-stained worshiper walks around the mosque where the explosion took place, in Kabul, Afghanistan, Friday, April 29, 2022.

Associated Press

the mosque shook from the blast, the residents said, speaking on condition of anonymity, fearing for their own safety.

Ambulances raced to the site, driving up to the end of a narrow street in an eastern neighborhood of Kabul to reach the mosque, which belongs to Afghanistan's majority Sunni Muslims.

Wahid, an Afghan in his 30s, said he was home when he heard about the blast and

rushed to the mosque right away, knowing his brother was there. He recalled the scene of mayhem, the screams and shouts for help. He helped carry the wounded to ambulances. "Everyone was crying and covered in blood," Wahid said. "I was told my brother had been hurt."

The Associated Press spoke to Wahid outside the Italian-run EMERGENCY hospital, where he had gone to give blood, but Taliban

guards cordoned off the hospital, denying access to everyone but the wounded. He finally found his brother, wounded in the arm and leg.

The hospital, which treats only the war-wounded, tweeted that its staff reported the facility has admitted at least "23 wounded" and two who died shortly after the explosion.

Javid, who appeared to be in his late 20s, said he was on his way to the mosque

to join his brother and cousin who were already there, when he heard the explosion. He rushed to the scene.

"I was so afraid and ran there," he said, adding that he had found both his brother and their cousin, slightly injured and released after treatment. The explosion was so powerful, Javid said the roof of the mosque collapsed.

Wahid and Javid would only give their first names to the AP, fearing for their own safety.

The United Nations condemned the explosion, describing it as "heinous" and "yet another painful blow to the people of Afghanistan who continue to be exposed to unrelenting insecurity and violence," according to Ramiz Alakbarov, the U.N.'s deputy special representative coordinating humanitarian relief.

"It is unconscionable for civilians to be targeted indiscriminately as they go about their daily business, gathering for prayers, going to school or the market, or on their way to work," he said.

The explosion was the latest in a series of such blasts amid relentless attacks across the country. □

# Aid group reports surging numbers in child abuse in Pakistan



In this picture taken on May 4, 2017, Kausar Parveen comforts her child who was allegedly raped by a mullah or religious cleric, in Kehrora Pakka, Pakistan.

Associated Press

By KATHY GANNON and MUNIR AHMED

Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — A Pakistani aid group dedicated to child protection said Fri-

day its data shows assaults and sexual abuse of children have surged by nearly a third in the country last year.

The organization's director

said she fears an increase in "dark web" gangs trading in child pornography and buying and selling children are to blame for the increase, along with lockdowns imposed during the coronavirus pandemic.

The Sahil organization said the number of cases increased 30% in 2021, compared to the year before. The group has been tracking child sexual abuse and working on child protection programs for more than 25 years.

In its annual report entitled "Cruel Numbers," the group says there were 3,852 cases of child sexual abuse in 2021 in Pakistan, including child marriages — or over 10 assaults per day.

Sahil records cases report-

ed daily in more than 80 national and regional publications across Pakistan. Roughly 80% of those cases result in charges, the report said, noting that the vast majority of abuse cases rarely get reported.

According to the data, 54% of the victims were girls and 46% were boys. The sexual abuse of boys mostly took place between the ages of 6 and 16, girls were abused at an even younger age.

Munizae Bano, the organization's executive director, expressed surprise at the dramatic surge and while she blamed pandemic lockdowns for some of the increase in child abuse, she said criminal activity perpetrated by gangs trading in children are on the rise.

"Absolutely, it is more active here," she told The Associated Press, speaking over the phone from Islamabad, the Pakistani capital. During pandemic measures such as lockdowns and school closures, child abuse rose in many places, in part because with children being out of school, there was less supervision, increasing their vulnerability.

The majority of those committing the assaults were family acquaintances or otherwise known to the children, said the report. "Acquaintances are still the most involved in child sexual abuse, as well as service providers, family members, strangers, and women abettors," it noted. □



# Haitians struggle to find food, shelter amid new gang battle

By **PIERRE-RICHARD LUXA-MA and EVENS SANON**  
**Associated Press**  
**PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)**

— Heavy gunfire echoed Thursday in a once quiet neighborhood in Haiti's capital that has become ground zero in a gang fight that has killed at least 20 people, injured more than a dozen and forced thousands to flee their homes this week.

Parents grabbed children by the hands as they balanced bags on their heads with the few belongings they could salvage after gang members ousted them from their homes.

The fighting raging in four districts on the northern side of Port-au-Prince is a new peak in the criminal violence that has surged as increasingly powerful gangs try to control more territory during the political power vacuum left by the July 7 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse.

"I left everything behind," said Kerline Brutus, 35, who fled with her three children from one of the neighborhoods, Butte Boyer, a long quiet district where she has lived more than 25 years.

She had to abandon her 96-year-old paralyzed father because she couldn't carry him. "I don't know how he's doing, if he's still alive," she said.

Brutus said she keeps praying for him as she struggles to find shelter for her family. They have been huddling under the front step of a store with an awning that protects them from the rain, but she is looking for more permanent shelter.

"It seems like this country has no authorities. No one came here to see us. We don't know how long we're going to be here or how long this is going to last," she said, echoing the frustration of Haitians over the rise in violence.

Some 100 police officers carrying automatic weapons spread through the neighborhood checking people and their belongings, but barrages of gunfire rang out nearby.

The administration of Prime Minister Ariel Henry has

struggled to improve security even as it gets help from the international community to boost an understaffed and underfunded police department.

Defenders Plus, a local human rights group, accused political leaders of being careless, incompetent and unable "to ensure one of the basic functions of any State: the security of its territory."

It also demanded that authorities "assume their responsibilities in order to guarantee the population's right to life and security."

Government officials did not return calls for comment.

Authorities said the fighting between a gang known as Chen Mechan (Bad Dog in Haitian Creole) and the 400 Mawozo gang, which kidnapped 17 U.S. missionaries last year, began Sunday. The 400 Mawozo gang is considered the more powerful of the two and has long been accused of kidnapping and other violent acts.

Government officials have said they worry the violence in that area will worsen and that people will continue to flee.

"This almost cost me my life because they broke into my home and had me lay on the ground," said Melissa Vital, 25, who has a 3-year-old daughter. "Luckily my boyfriend wasn't there because they were killing men that they found in houses." She said the gang members ordered her and her daughter to leave their home in Butte Boyer.

"I don't know where to go right now," Vital said, adding that she is feeling weak because she is still breastfeeding her daughter but hasn't had much to eat. "I've been with the same clothes since Sunday."

Thousands of Haitians affected by a surge of gang violence last year in the Martissant community in the south of Port-au-Prince are still living in crowded and unhygienic government shelters, and it isn't clear where newly displaced families will go.

Emmanuel Piersaint, a co-



A police officer patrols a street during an anti-gang operation in Croix-des-Missions north of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Thursday, April 28, 2022.

Associated Press

ordinator with Haiti's Civil Protection Agency, told The Associated Press that

officials provided displaced families with toiletry kits and gave them dishes of spa-

ghetti, rice and beans. "We hope the situation will not worsen," he said. □

# LABOR DAY

## BINGO

**Monday, May 2 | 1pm**

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### PROGRESSIVE\*

Progressive within 51 Calls  

## \$500

Progressive within 52 Calls  

## \$300

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Game 5	+ or Cross	\$250
Game 6	Postage Stamps	\$250
Game 7	Letter T	\$300
Game 8	Full Card	\$750

\*Progressive within 50 calls, amount unless hit before 5/02/22. \*\*Except on Progressive.

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\$7 for 4-Card BINGO | 8 Games to Play

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Some regions require proof or certification of negative COVID-19 status before allowing people into or out of the country. With rules and guidelines varying greatly from country to country, the safest approach is to have recent proof you are COVID-19 negative before you get to the airport. Covid Test Center @ Paseo provides both PCR and Antigen type testing with results within hours; and both are accepted by the CDC.

Covid Test Center @ Paseo is conveniently located at the Paseo Herencia Mall in the heart of the Palm Beach Strip and right across from the Playa Linda and Holiday Inn hotels; only two doors from T.G.I. Friday's. We are open seven days a week, between 9 am and 9 pm. This gives you the choice to walk in when it better suits you. It can be at the start or at the end of your day. No appointment needed here.

The friendly technicians at Covid Test Center @ Paseo will take your information as we are aware it is imperative that this shows accurately on the

results. For a seamless process, please verify that you have provided the correct email to deliver the certificate. Said certificate can be printed at our offices should you wish to do so.

We understand that nobody enjoys doing a nasal swab. That is why we take pride in our reputation of being the gentlest swabbers on the island. First, we will not rush you just to go to the next in line. Through clear given instructions we want you to feel comfortable. When you are ready, we will promptly but tenderly take a proper sample. Many elsewhere traumatized people praise the difference it makes to test with us.

Forget about counting hours before your flight, our turnaround is fast! For travel to the US, for example, a day before will suffice. A great game plan is to test first, then head out for an evening of dining, shopping and entertainment at the Paseo Herencia Mall, home of the water and lights show in the evenings. By the time you are back at the hotel, your results will be ready in your inbox.

A PCR test costs \$75 and results are ready the next day, while Antigen test costs \$35 with same day results. If you are staying at an off-high-rise area property, you can benefit from the free parking our customers receive at the mall lot.).

For more information follow us on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter.



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## 77% of 2019 departing passengers recovered in 1st Quarter of 2022 Recovery of 86% in March 2022 versus 2019

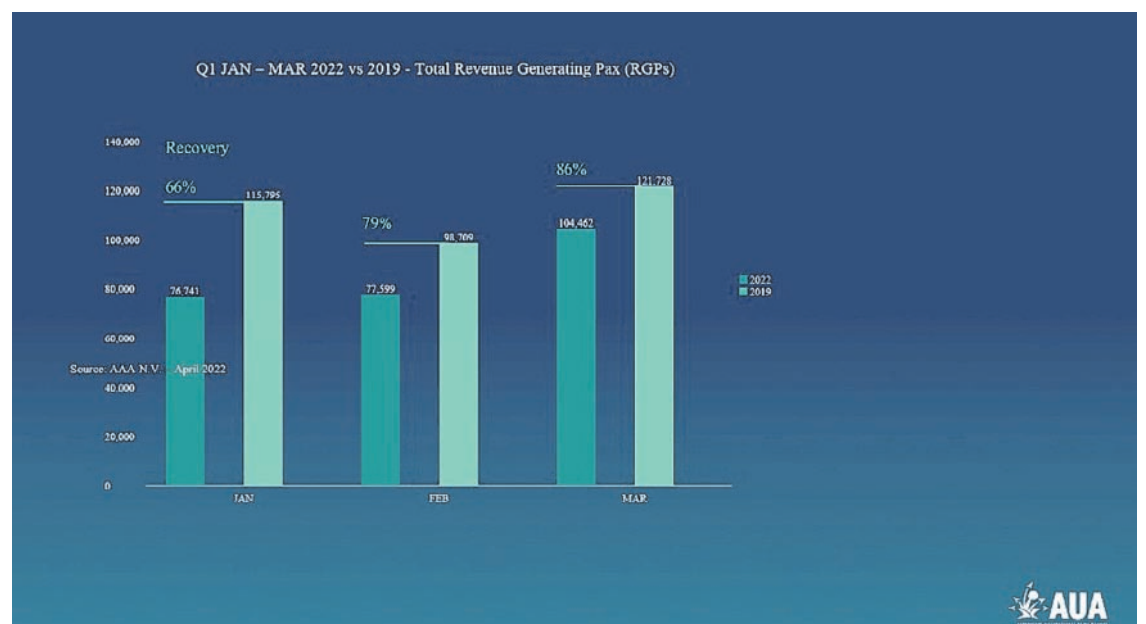
ORANJESTAD – Aruba Airport Authority N.V. (AAA) can report as follows on AUA Airport's performance for the 1st quarter of 2022; like 2021, it was a slow start, however with a satisfying recovery rate versus the same period in 2019. The total amount of revenue generating passengers (departing passengers) handled in the 1st quarter of 2022 during January, February and March represented a total recovery of 77% versus 2019.

### 1st Quarter 2022 per month

In January 2022, AUA Airport handled 76,741 departing passengers. This was 16% less than the December of 2021 and was a direct result of the Omicron variant that gripped the world at that time. The same effect was noticeable during

February also where AUA Airport handled 77,599 which was a mere 1% more than the month before. In March however the numbers increased considerably to 104,462 which was an increase of 35% versus February 2022. During these first three months of 2022 199,092 passengers (pax) travelled to the US, 7,141 pax to Canada, 21,375 pax to Europe, 8,852 pax to the Netherlands Antilles, and 22,342 pax to Latin America.

An average outbound passenger load factor (PLF) (number of seats of the total seats on board an aircraft that are occupied when departing from AUA Airport) for the US Market of 57%, 69% and 86% were reported for respectively the months of January, February,



and March. The average PLF for all markets was respectively 61%, 71% and 85% during that same period. In March we reached thus the same level of average outbound PLF for all markets as that of 2019, which was 85%.

During the past months, AUA Airport averaged 31 flights per day, down from an average of 41 daily flights during the same period in 2019.

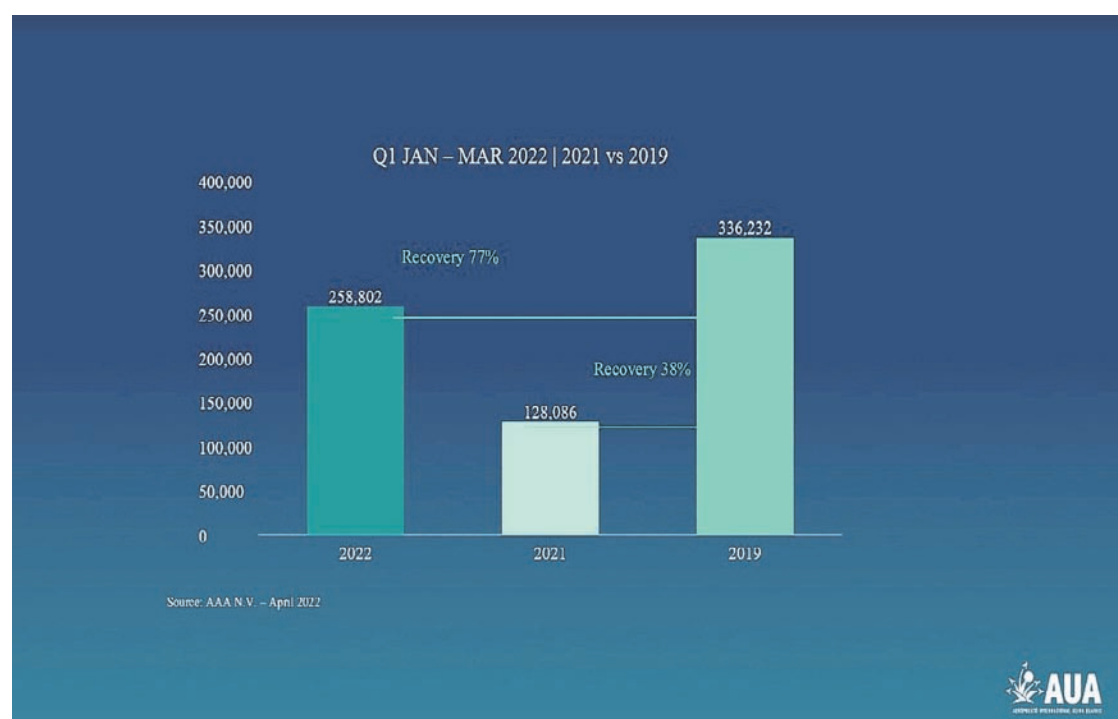
During January, February, and March AUA Airport recovered respectively 66%, 79% and 86% of the amount of departing passengers that were handled in those same months in 2019. The recovery in total for the first quarter of 2022 amounted to 77% versus 2019, which was up 39% points versus the recovery enjoyed in 2021.

### About AUA Airport

AUA Airport is one of the busiest airports in the Caribbean region, with 22 different airlines operating into Aruba contributing to processing over 2.5 million passengers per year (pre-covid) and providing air

service to 28 destinations worldwide. AUA Airport is operationally solid where over 95% of all visitors are leisure guests: 80% from the United States & Canada, 9% from Latin America, 8% from Europe, and 3% from Dutch Caribbean, year to date, March 2022. AUA Airport attributes this to the island's stable economic and political climate, hospitable and multilingual population, and safe environment. AUA Airport undergoes continuous upgrades to maintain its position as one of the region's most innovative airports.

Learn more about what's happening at AUA Airport by visiting [www.airport-aruba.com](http://www.airport-aruba.com) and connect with AUA Airport on Twitter: [twitter.com/Aruba\\_Airport](https://twitter.com/Aruba_Airport), Facebook: [facebook.com/ArubaAirport](https://facebook.com/ArubaAirport), Instagram: [instagram.com/arubaairport/](https://instagram.com/arubaairport/) and LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/ArubaAirport](https://linkedin.com/ArubaAirport).





## More than \$150,000 in prizes The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, with its amazing campaign: Mega Win Luxury Vacations!



THE RITZ-CARLTON

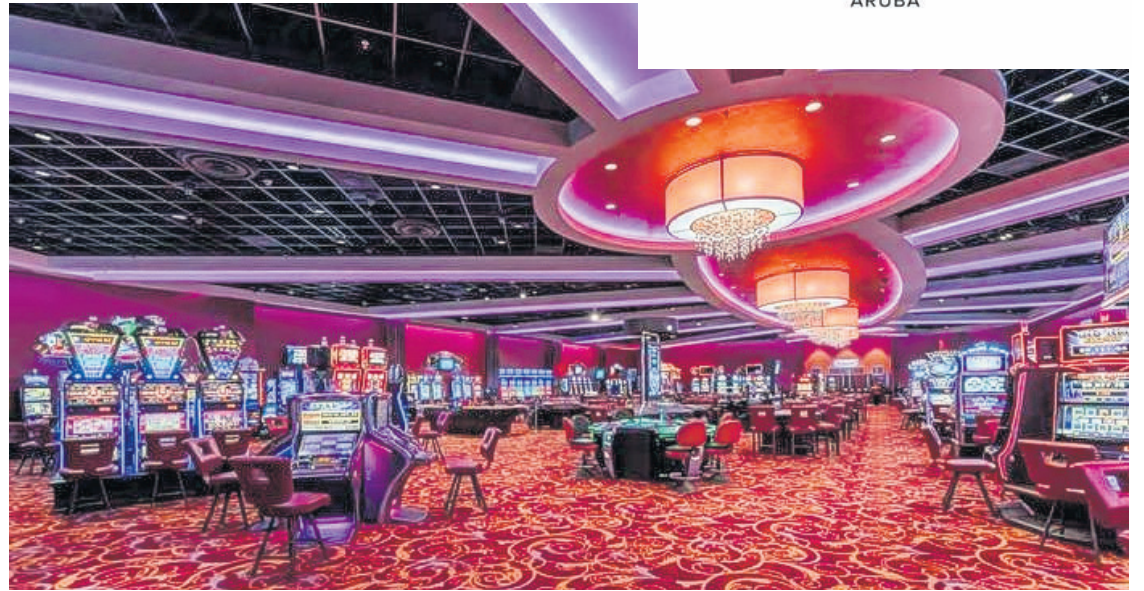
ARUBA



**PALM BEACH —** The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba Mega Win Luxury Vacations Campaign! This campaign started on February 1st and will go on till April 30th, 2022, where they will raffle dream vacations to the newest hotels in the Caribbean: The Ritz-Carlton, Turks and Caicos and The St. Regis Bermuda Resort. They will also raffle dream vacations to The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba and more prizes amongst their visitors.

All members of The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba can participate in this campaign till April 30th. There will be still 1 drawing on April 30th. A total of 10 finalists will be selected on each drawing date and will qualify through the raffle tickets in the raffle box and through the MVP (Most Valuable Player) promotion. To participate is very easy: you need to be a member of The Casino VIP Club. For every 80 points you accumulate on slot play and every \$40 dollars in Theoretical Win on table play you will receive one ticket. In addition you have the option to receive one free raffle ticket to participate by visiting one of our Restaurants at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba.

With every dinner purchase at Casa Nonna New York and BLT Steak, you will receive a voucher to participate. Simply present the restaurant voucher together with the dinner receipt at the Casino VIP Desk on the same night



to redeem your raffle ticket.

### The prizes for this promotion will be as follows:

- 3 x vacations for two persons to The Ritz-Carlton, Turks and Caicos
- 3 x vacations for two persons to The St. Regis Bermuda Resort
- 3 x vacations for two persons to The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba
- 21 x slot credit prizes for a total of \$52,500

The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba keeps innovating by bringing exciting campaigns for their visitors who are always surprised and excited to participate. Additionally, The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba offers a thoughtfully-tiered player reward program called 'Elevate', featuring exclusive benefits and events for members. Members can earn points for both slot machines and table games and receive cash redemption from slot machine points, while accumulated table comps can be redeemed towards enjoying the hotel's celebrated amenities, including complimentary rooms nights, dining, and spa.

The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba is known as the island's luxury casino where guests enjoy exceptional personalized service, a great selection of table games and state-of-the-art slot machines for a casino experience like no other.

For more information about the Mega Win Luxury Vacations Campaign, the Elevate Tier Program and other promotions, visit us at The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba VIP Desk or call us at 527-2276/ 527-2277 and we will be delighted to assist you. □



## Aruba to Me

**ORANJESTAD —** You are back and we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is ..... Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: [news@arubatoday.com](mailto:news@arubatoday.com) and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.

Show us how you celebrate labor day on our beautiful Island!

Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again. □



# Q&A: Direct Relief CEO Thomas Tighe on how to help Ukraine

By **GLENN GAMBOA**  
AP Business Writer

Thomas Tighe says helping Ukrainians can generally be done by using existing aid strategies. It's just a matter of scale and adapting to circumstances on the ground.

Since Russia invaded Ukraine in February, Tighe and the nonprofit humanitarian medical organization Direct Relief, where he has been president and CEO since 2000, have provided more than 50 million doses of medication and 254 tons of medical aid to people in Ukraine and neighboring countries.

Earlier this month, it launched Health 4 Ukraine, a payment and distribution program that will cover 100% of prescription co-pays and 85% of non-prescription drug costs for about 400,000 Ukrainian refugees in Poland. The system was developed and launched with help from Pelion S.A., Poland's largest healthcare company.

However, there are still some wartime requests that have — as of now — stymied Tighe and his teams. "We have not been able to fulfill the request for hundreds of ambulances with armor in them," said Tighe, adding that they are needed to help evacuate Ukrainians with medical issues from the country. "OK, we're good at a lot of things, but this is not in our typical range."

The Associated Press re-



In this image provided by Direct Relief, Direct Relief CEO Thomas Tighe stands in front of boxes of N95 masks at Direct Relief's Santa Barbara, Calif., warehouse and headquarters in March 2020.

Associated Press

cently spoke with Tighe about Ukrainian aid, a topic he will also address Monday at "Crisis in Ukraine and Beyond: How You Can Help Now and Over the Long Run," a free virtual program co-sponsored by The Associated Press, the Chronicle of Philanthropy and The Conversation. The interview was edited for clarity and length.

**Q. You were recently in Poland working on aid for Ukrainian refugees. How was the experience?**

**A.** It was rewarding, ultimately, to be able to do something. We actually put \$10 million behind a program with a private company that wanted to step up and do it and had this capability to create a charitable pharmacy program. The Ukrainians who had to flee and were in Po-

land were covered by the national health insurance, but could still not obtain medication they needed because the national health insurance has a co-pay requirement. Now they can. I felt like anything you do, it's not enough. We've got to do more. But it's nice to see.

**Q. Direct Relief provides aid for natural disasters, or for health crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the logistics and the supplies for those helping out on the front lines. Does any of that operational knowledge transfer to a wartime situation like we have in Ukraine? Or do you have to come up with a brand new game plan?**

**A.** Some does, but at the abstract level. A wildfire, earthquake, hurricane — the disruptive event simultaneously spikes demand

for health services, because people get hurt or injured, and decreases the capacity to deliver the service, because hospitals are damaged or roads are out. We're used to that at the abstract level. The difference here is that if there's an earthquake, people immediately pull together to try to open up the distribution channel. Here, the capacity is getting worse because hospitals keep getting bombed. There's targeting of the infrastructure. So when people are trying to open up the supply lines to rebuild the capacity, they keep getting destroyed. That's the adjustment. You have to reallocate things because it's a dynamic situation.

**Q. Logistics in those situations are hard enough. Layering wartime safety precautions on top of that**

**must make it exponentially harder.**

**A.** It feels like this is an event that should be in black and white in a high school history book or something. Instead, I'm seeing it on TV every night. But what you're also seeing is this kind of uncommon courage in Ukraine. What the Polish people are doing, it's embodying righteousness. What the Russians are doing is embodying cruelty. It certainly makes anything we're doing seem very small. But it's good motivation to keep doing it.

**Q. How would you suggest individual donors who want to help take action?**

**A.** Figure out what you care about. For personal philanthropy, it's really important to find something you believe in, so that your act of generosity is going to actually translate into something you really feel good about. And that's such a personal choice. Then, do your homework. It's just general consumer advice, but look up and see if the group is explaining what they're doing with the money. I think the downside of these high profile emotionally charged events is it can lend itself to exploitation from a fundraising perspective. The Ukrainian people's tragedy is not an excuse for fundraising. And there's an obligation if you receive money for Ukraine, it's not for you.

It's for you to help the people of Ukraine. □

# Airbnb allows employees to live and work from anywhere

Airbnb will allow its employees to live and work almost anywhere around the world, fully embracing a remote work policy to attract staff and ensure flexibility. The San Francisco short-term-stay company said late Thursday that under the new policy, employees can work from the office, home or during their travels to 170 countries.

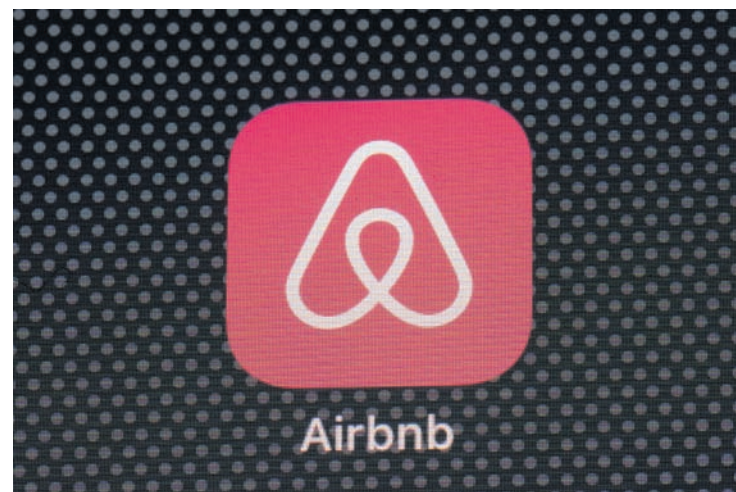
Staff will still have to meet in person for regular team meetings and events, CEO Brian Chesky said in a message to employees. Salaries

won't change if employees decide to move.

Employees can spend up to three months working in each country they visit every year but they will still need a permanent address for tax and payroll reasons, which involves a "mountain of complexities," but Chesky said the company is working on an open-source solution.

The new policy will put the company in a better position to hire and retain the best people by not "limiting the talent pool to a com-

muting radius around our offices," Chesky said. Remote work and flexibility "will become the predominant way that we all work 10 years from now," he said. Millions of people switched to working remotely during the pandemic to limit potential exposure to COVID-19. Companies are beginning to ask those workers to come back to the office, at least on a hybrid basis, including other tech companies such as Facebook parent Meta and Microsoft. □



The Airbnb app icon is seen on an iPad screen, Saturday, May 8, 2021, in Washington.

Associated Press



# CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

**ACROSS** 39 Custom

1 Fixed shoes history

6 Pub pastime material

11 Merge

12 Sung drama homes

13 Spotless

14 Daughter of Leda

15 Words on a candy heart

17 Break off

18 One, for Juan

19 Conductor Eugene

22 Signing need

23 Fresh-water varieties

24 "—

Amore"

25 Verb in an O'Neill title

27 Screening org.

30 Grassy expanse

31 Equip

32 Ump's call

33 New Orleans cooking style

35 Lama's land

38 Safe spot

## DOWN

1 Absorb, like a sponge

2 One way to shop

3 Rests atop

4 Greek vowels

5 Cub Scout leader

6 Cry from Homer

7 Zoo beast

8 Let up

S	O	F	T	C		C	A	F	E	S
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Yesterday's answer

9 Market directions

10 Yellow-gray

16 Unpredictable

20 Protective sort

21 Switz. neighbor

24 "I don't need the details," for short

25 Liner trip

26 Granola treat

27 Treasure stores

28 Hushed

29 FBI employees

30 White House acronym

34 Roof feature

36 Nest sight

37 Golf need

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41						42				

4-30

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

4-30

CRYPTOQUOTE

RK QDN ZGSY G BNGHGSYWW,

VNQ G YDGTYWH. — OCRSY

WGTYZDDX

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: APRIL IS THE CRUELLEST MONTH, BREEDING LILACS OUT OF THE DEAD LAND, MIXING MEMORY AND DESIRE. — T.S. ELIOT

## PBS' 'Ridley Road' holds lessons to America from '60s London



This image released by PBS shows Jack Morris, left, and Vivien Epstein in a scene from "Ridley Road," a four-part series that makes it's U.S. debut May 1 on PBS' "Masterpiece."

Associated Press

By MARK KENNEDY

AP Entertainment Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — It took eight long years for Sarah Solemani to get a murky part of Britain's post-World War II history from the pages of a book to our TV screens.

She had been impressed by Jo Bloom's 2014 novel "Ridley Road" about a Jewish-led underground anti-fascist resistance movement in London in the 1960s. But making it into a series was hard-going at first.

"It got rejected everywhere. No one wanted to make it. It felt very niche," she explained. Then two things happened: Brexit in England and Donald Trump in the United States. Suddenly, nativist lurches in democracies weren't so niche.

"I just had to be relentless in pushing it. And I'm glad I did, because, actually, it reveals a lot about the country when it came out," said the English actor, writer and activist.

"Ridley Road," a four-part series that makes its U.S. debut May 1 on PBS' "Masterpiece," takes viewers to a part of British history that they may not have known. In the early '60s, members of the fascist National So-

cialist Movement held rallies in London, waving swastikas and demanding leaders "free Britain from Jewish control."

"We like to think we're on the right side of history," said Solemani, who grew up in London with an Iranian father and Northern Irish mother. "We like to think of history as good guys and bad guys. And we were the good guys and Hitler was a bad guy and he died in the bunker and that was the end of it. And it's not true."

"Ridley Road" — in the '60s, a multicultural thoroughfare in northeast London — centers on an unconventional heroine, a young Jewish hairdresser who goes undercover into the neo-Nazi movement. While her story may be fictional, the history of fascists fighting anti-fascists on the streets of London is not.

"I think what this series does is just remind us that we are constantly battling against fascism, Nazism and neo-Nazism. I think the show is very relevant because it reminds us that this is ongoing," said Susanne Simpson, "Masterpiece" executive producer. "This is a slice of history that certainly I didn't know had taken place in Britain, and I don't think

many people had known. But it's true today. We see it happening in the U.S. and we see it happening world-wide. And what question I think Sarah was asking with the show was, 'What are we going to do about it?'"

While set during what is considered the fun, liberating Swinging Sixties, the series explores how fascism can take hold. In the case of England, the rise of large corporations disturbing main street's mom-and-pop stores, an influx of foreign workers to rebuild post-war Britain and the bulldozing of homes to make skyscrapers all played a part. Some vulnerable people became susceptible to the slogan "Take Our Country Back."

"No one sets out to be a villain of history. Everyone is setting out thinking they're doing the best thing they can in the moment they're in. So it tries to humanize why white working class people are susceptible and vulnerable to far-right views," Solemani said.

Anti-fascists — working without the support of the government — used their muscle and espionage techniques such as wire-tapping and infiltration to disrupt the National Socialist Movement, which was behind synagogue arsons. Often the anti-fascists were Jewish ex-servicemen who had fought the Nazis abroad.

"They'd been at war and they'd come home only to find Nazis on their doorstep. So in their eyes, it was muscle against muscle, an eye for an eye. There was no other option," said Solemani. "It's a remarkable story of hope and sacrifice."

The chapter in British history might have seemed very dusty and foreign to Americans until 2017 when hundreds of white nationalists descended on Charlottesville, Virginia, screaming "Jews will not replace us!" All of a sudden, "Take Our Country Back" wasn't too far away from other nativist slogans like "Make America Great Again." □

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## Millions of bees used in pollination die in airline shipping



In this Sept. 1, 2015, photo, a honeybee works atop gift zinnia in Accord, N.Y.

Associated Press

By The Associated Press  
About 5 million honeybees bound for Alaska last weekend got waylaid when Delta Air Lines routed them through Atlanta, where most of the bees died after being left for hours in crates on the ground during hot weather.

The bees were the first of two shipments ordered by Alaska beekeeper Sarah McElrea from a distributor in California. The bees were to be used to pollinate apple orchards and nurseries in Alaska, where they are not native.

But the bees were bumped from their original route to Anchorage, Alaska, and instead put on a flight to Atlanta, where they were to be transferred to an Anchorage-bound plane, according to published reports.

McElrea said she worried when the 800-pound shipment didn't arrive in Atlanta in time to make the connecting flight. The next day, she said, Delta told her some bees had escaped, so airline workers put the crates holding the bees outside a Delta cargo bay. In a panic, McElrea reached a beekeeper in Atlanta, who rushed to the airport and discovered that many of the bees had died from heat and starvation,

according to The New York Times.

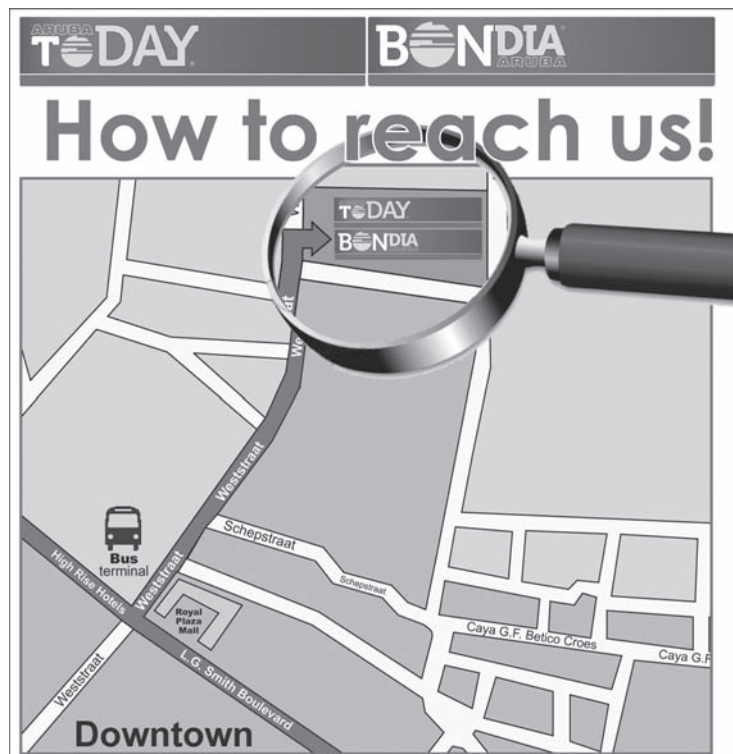
Delta called it an "unfortunate situation."

In an emailed statement, Delta spokeswoman Catherine Morrow told The Associated Press on Friday that the airline "was made aware of the shipment situation ... and quickly engaged the appropriate internal teams to assess the situation. We have taken immediate action to implement new measures to ensure events of this nature do not occur in the future." Morrow said Delta apologized to McElrea. The airline

declined to make anyone available for an interview. The beekeeper in Atlanta, Edward Morgan, called more than a dozen people to go to the airport and try to save any bees that were still alive.

"It's devastating to see that many dead," Georgia beekeeper Julia Mahood told Atlanta broadcaster WABE. "Just clumps of dead bees that had no chance because they were left outside with no food and basically got lost in Delta's machinery."

McElrea, who runs a business called Sarah's Alaska



Honey, said that she had received previous shipments of honeybees on Delta from Sacramento, California, to Anchorage via Seattle many times. The airline told her that last weekend's shipment didn't fit on the plane, so they were rerouted through Atlanta.

McElrea said her supplier in California will replace the shipment, which was worth about \$48,000. She said she is hoping Delta provides some help, although she acknowledged that shipping live animals carries risk. □

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# Taylor vs Serrano at MSG is a main event for women's boxing

By **BRIAN MAHONEY**

AP Sports Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Back when Katie Taylor had to pretend she was a boy so she could box, or even not long ago when Amanda Serrano was fighting for thousands of dollars with a resume that in men's boxing would earn her many millions, it was hard to imagine where they are now.

They meet Saturday night in what has been called the most significant women's boxing match ever, the first to headline Madison Square Garden. At stake are the unbeaten Taylor's four lightweight titles, but this bout goes beyond just the belts.

It's grown even bigger than what organizers hoped, with a sold-out crowd possible, the Empire State Building lighting up in the colors of the fighters' countries and unprecedented media attention for women's boxing. Those involved say it proves that if the best fight the best, with the proper promotional push, it doesn't matter what gender they are.

"Women's boxing wasn't even a sanctioned sport in Ireland," Taylor said. "Now here we are many years later headlining Madison Square Garden, the most iconic venue in boxing, and making history as the biggest fight in female boxing history. This is just incredible."

Taylor (20-0, 6 KOs) became the undisputed champion with a victory at the Garden in 2019, while Serrano (42-1-1 30 KOs), a champion in seven weight classes who moves up two divisions for this fight, has fought in the smaller Hulu Theater at MSG, but never in the main arena.

Organizers at first considered the Hulu Theater for this fight, but after deciding it was big enough for the big room, planned on configuring the venue for around 10,000 seats. They had to make more available when those were all purchased. About 15,000 already have been sold, with a significant number of Irish fans coming to sup-



Boxers Amanda Serrano, right, and Katie Taylor pose for pictures on the observation deck of the Empire State Building in New York, Tuesday, April 26, 2022.

Associated Press

port the 2012 Olympic gold medalist.

There will be plenty more for Serrano, a Puerto Rican who lives in Brooklyn and is a slight favorite, according to Fanduel Sportsbook.

"I can't wait until Saturday night to prove that we're deserving of this opportunity, of this spotlight, just everything all together," Serrano said.

Promoter Eddie Hearn sees it as a culmination of Taylor's quest to never stop trying to do more than what seemed possible for her. She would wear headgear into and out of the gym to

conceal her appearance and not use her first name when she began fighting, because girls weren't allowed to in Ireland. He credits her with pushing the International Olympic Committee to make women's boxing a medal sport and for always seeking the biggest events once she turned pro.

"When Katie came into my office six years ago, we had a dream and we always said, 'One day you'll headline at Madison Square Garden and make a million dollars,' and I'm thinking probably not, but we'll just

keep saying it," Hearn said. "And here we are."

Serrano, despite her decorated career, was earning \$5,000 or \$10,000 purses not long ago, according to promoter Jake Paul. But once she hooked up with Paul, the YouTube star-turned boxer and promoter, and fighting on his cards, she went to another tax bracket as easily as she bounces between weight classes.

"To think that we are here a year later is massive," Paul said, adding that the event's hype "feels like a unification of the heavy-

weight division."

Talks fell through for a match a couple of years ago, when they would have fought with no fans because of the coronavirus pandemic. Serrano — whose sister, Cindy, was beat by Taylor in 2018 — figured there was too much demand for the matchup to not be put back together.

"I was pretty confident the fight was going to happen, but not at this magnitude," she said.

Taylor and Serrano are featured on a billboard in Times Square and atop taxis in New York. They appeared together earlier this week on NBC's "Today" show and on the observation deck of the Empire State Building, which on Saturday will be lit in a mixture of Ireland's green and orange, and the red, white and blue of Puerto Rico. Some 200 members of the media are expected a couple of blocks away that night inside MSG.

"This is reflective of a broader trend in sport," said Joseph Markowski, the executive vice president of DAZN, which will stream the card. "People are starting to realize that women, when they're given the platform, the marketing, the PR polish that their male counterparts get, the eyeballs come. When the eyeballs come, people are entertained and amazed by what these athletes do. This is long overdue."

Trailblazing women's athletes such as tennis Hall of Famer Billie Jean King and boxers Laila Ali and Christy Martin have gotten in on the promotion. Ali's father fought the most famous boxing match at Madison Square Garden, with Joe Frazier beating Muhammad Ali in their first fight in 1971.

Now it's Taylor and Serrano who will write boxing history in the arena.

"No matter what happens Saturday night, I think the real winners are the fans and women in general and the sport of women's boxing, because it's only going to grow from now on," Serrano said.



# Dodgers' Bauer suspended 2 seasons over alleged sex assault

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Trevor Bauer was suspended Friday for two full seasons without pay by Major League Baseball for violating the league's domestic violence and sexual assault policy, which he denies. Bauer's lengthy suspension comes after a San Diego woman, whom the pitcher had met through social media, alleged that Bauer beat and sexually abused her last year. She later sought — but was denied — a restraining order. Los Angeles prosecutors said in February there was insufficient evidence to prove the woman's accusations beyond a reasonable doubt. Bauer repeatedly has said that everything that happened between the two was consensual.

"In the strongest possible terms, I deny committing any violation of the league's domestic violence and sexual assault policy," he said Friday in a statement. "I am appealing this action and expect to prevail. As we have throughout this process, my representatives and I respect the confidentiality of the pro-



Los Angeles Dodgers starting pitcher Trevor Bauer delivers in the first inning of a baseball game against the Atlanta Braves, June 6, 2021, in Atlanta.

ceedings." If the suspension is upheld, Bauer will lose about \$60 million in salary. Bauer earlier this week sued his accuser in federal court, a move that came less than three months after prosecutors decided not to file criminal charges against the pitcher. Bauer named the woman and one of her attorneys, Nirajan Fred

Thiagarajah, as defendants in the lawsuit. The Associated Press does not typically identify people who say they have been victims of sexual assault. The lawsuit said that "the damage to Mr. Bauer has been extreme" after the woman alleged that he had choked her into unconsciousness, punched her repeatedly and had

anal sex with her without her consent during two sexual encounters last year. The pitcher has said the two engaged in rough sex at his Pasadena home at her suggestion and followed guidelines they agreed to in advance. Each encounter ended with them joking and her spending the night, he said. Bauer was placed on ad-

ministrative leave last July 2 under the joint domestic violence and sexual assault policy of MLB and the players' association. The leave has been repeatedly extended and Bauer continued to be paid his \$32 million salary while on leave. He stopped getting paid Friday.

MLB announced the suspension in a short statement that did not provide details of the findings of its investigation, adding: "In accordance with the terms of the Policy, the Commissioner's Office will not issue any further statements at this point in time."

After winning his first Cy Young Award with the Cincinnati Reds in 2020, Bauer agreed to a \$102 million, three-year contract to join his hometown Dodgers. He did not pitch after June 29 and finished with an 8-2 record and a 2.59 ERA in 17 appearances. He was paid his \$28 million salary last year. "The Dodgers organization takes all allegations of this nature very seriously and does not condone or excuse any acts of domestic violence or sexual assault," the team's statement said. □

Associated Press

# Collins and Osaka win to reach 2nd round at Madrid Open

By **TALES AZZONI**  
AP Sports Writer

**MADRID (AP)** — Being more positive is paying off for former No. 1 Naomi Osaka early in her clay-court season. Osaka kicked off her clay campaign with a comfortable 6-3, 6-1 win over qualifier Anastasia Potapova in the first round on the Madrid Open center court on Friday. "I'm honestly trying to be more positive with myself," the 36th-ranked Osaka said. "This year I came a week early to train on red clay, so just trying to give myself more chances to do better. ... To be able to do it in two sets, for me, it's a really good starting block." The four-time Grand Slam champion withdrew from the French Open last year and took a break from

competition after saying she "suffered long bouts of depression" and experienced "huge waves of anxiety" before speaking to the media. She was brought to tears this year at Indian Wells by a comment from a spectator. She said ahead of the Madrid Open she was focused on not being too hard on herself. "Today, for me, it was really fun, just being able to be back on the clay and kind of not taking those moments for granted," she said. Australian Open finalist Danielle Collins won the last eight games to advance 7-5, 6-0 over Monica Puig, the Olympic gold medalist in Rio de Janeiro in 2016. Puig is returning to action following shoulder and bicep surgeries. The Puerto

Rican has appeared in only four matches since her first major surgery in 2019. "You never know what to expect when someone's been out for a while, and they've been working on some things," the sixth-seeded Collins said. "You don't know what type of game style that they're going to play, so it was a little bit tricky trying to anticipate what she was going to do. I think she played at a super-high level, especially in the first set, and gave me a lot of challenges." Collins also missed matches this season because of injury, including a neck ailment she picked up during her quarterfinal run in Miami. Another American to advance was 12th-seeded Jessica Pegula against Camila Giorgi, 7-5, 2-6, 7-5. Madison Keys was eliminat-



Naomi Osaka of Japan serves against Anastasia Potapova during their match at the Mutua Madrid Open tennis tournament in Madrid, Spain, Friday, April 29, 2022.

Associated Press

ed by fourth-seeded Maria Sakkari 6-7 (8), 6-3, 6-4. Seventh-seeded Garbine Muguruza, one of the home-crowd favorites in the Spanish capital, defeated Ajla Tomljanovic 7-5, 6-2, while Leylah Fernán-

dez, the U.S. Open runner-up, beat Andrea Petkovic 6-1, 1-6, 6-4. Jil Teichmann handed three-time Madrid champion Petra Kvitova her first loss in the first round at the tournament since 2010. □



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